

New International Research Training Group (IRTG) between Monash University and Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Germany funded by Monash and German Research Council

For the first time an International Research Training Group was established in collaboration with an Australian partner, featuring cooperative research between the two universities, structured cross-border scientific qualifications and promotion of junior investigators.

The new doctoral programs runs in the first period of four and a half years and received 3.1 million Euro (\$3.77 AUD) funding by the DFG (including a Program allowance for indirect project costs). The DFG currently funds 226 Research Training Groups and 48 International Colleges.

The IRTG "**Molecular Pathogenesis of Male Reproductive Disorders,**" is dedicated to male reproductive biology and medicine as an important medical condition. The German-Australian collaboration is focusing on building knowledge in the areas of reproductive immunology in men and on the roles of growth factors and hormones for normal or pathological function of the male reproductive tract, special emphasis to the roles of activin and follistatin, proteins representing a major research focus in the Monash partners' labs. A special feature of the IRTG is the planned joint award of the Doctorate by both universities. The training program includes complementary modules at both universities in both molecular and cell biology of reproduction as well as in translational aspects of research outcomes. Spokesperson at Monash University: Prof. Kate Loveland, Ph.D., Spokesperson at Justus-Liebig University, Giessen, Germany: Prof. Andreas Meinhardt)



Giessen and Monash co-applicants following the on-site review by the German Research Foundation (DFG), July 2012 in Giessen. Photo: Bruce Loveland